



UNIVERSITY of GUYANA

Diaspora/Entrepreneurship Conference **June 16th to 20th, 2019**

Ramada Georgetown Princess

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Building a New Business Paradigm: Engaging the Diaspora for an Enhanced Caribbean Competitive Landscape Consider Papers/Panels/Participation

Co-Chairs:

Dr. Fitzgerald Yaw, *Director of Strategic Initiatives, Vice Chancellery, University of Guyana*

Prof. Leyland M. Lucas, *Dean, School of Entrepreneurship & Business Innovation, University of Guyana*

This combined Diaspora & Entrepreneurship Conference is for participants with and without entrepreneurship interests or expertise within and outside the Caribbean.

As we observe the economic challenges in the region and prepare, for example for the emergence of the Oil & Gas sector in Guyana, it is becoming increasingly obvious that the traditional ways of doing business cannot yield success. Economic and social development continue to be constrained by the 'brain drain' of the past decades and the absence of critical skills within the society. The gaps in skills and competencies necessary to spur local involvement are clear. This is not only reflected in the opportunities from which local companies and individuals can benefit, but also the need for rapid efforts at training within multiple technical and management sectors of the economy. This occurs at a time when the strategic implications of the shift away from the sugar industry are becoming more evident, and the movement towards greater entrepreneurial activity is being advocated.

This focus on entrepreneurial activity is of particular significance to the youth, women, indigenous, and diaspora populations, whose ideas and initiatives will serve as the foundation for new ventures and innovations. Yet, as we have seen, current initiatives to support these groups are often stymied by the absence of funding, lack of adequate training, and non-access to critical social, human, and other networks. These facts suggest that there is not only a need for the Diaspora to 'return home,' but also to bring their global business principles, connections, access to critical resources, and ideas to support business and social development.

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Under the abovementioned theme, the conference aims to enhance our understanding of the ways in which skills within the Diaspora can contribute to the development of Guyana and the wider Caribbean. As has been seen through the Singaporean, Chinese, Kenyan, and other countries lens, migration paths become increasingly important for traditional economies to be transformed to rapidly improve the quality of life of their citizens and residents and become dominant regional/global powers. As members of the Diaspora bring their human and financial capital to the Caribbean region, they assume levels of risk as entrepreneurs, and they bring their knowledge and networks to the entrepreneurial environment resulting in innovations, expansion of existing businesses, and the creation of new ones.

The Diaspora & Entrepreneurship Conference is intended to provide a forum for interdisciplinary debates and action to address various issues relevant to academics, researchers, practitioners, policy makers and the general community. Topics to be covered include, but are not limited to:

- Entrepreneurship: Opportunity Recognition, Exploration, and Exploitation
- Diaspora Entrepreneurship & Local Business Development: Motivation, Governance, and Trust
- Youth Entrepreneurship: Keys/challenges to success
- Indigenous entrepreneurship and Community Development
- Women entrepreneurship: societal challenges, barriers, and keys to success
- Refugee Entrepreneurs: Chances and challenges to success
- Gender & ethnicity in Entrepreneurship
- Credit Unions: Investment resource, mechanisms to enhance competitiveness
- Competitiveness of Caribbean entrepreneurs compared to foreign direct investors
- Business model/structure/mechanism of Diaspora entrepreneurs
- Open ICT Ecosystems as Catalysts for collaboration, growth and innovation
- The Diaspora as “Local Content”.

Important Dates:

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| ✓ Abstract Submission Deadline | Jan 15 th , 2019 |
| ✓ Notification of Abstract Acceptance | Feb 15 th , 2019 |
| ✓ Full paper/poster due for review | March 15 th , 2019 |
| ✓ Notice of paper acceptance decision | April 1 st , 2018 |
| ✓ Early Bird registration ends | April 15 th , 2019 |
| ✓ Final Submission due | May 1 st , 2019 |
| ✓ First Author registration Deadline | May 16 th , 2019 |
| ✓ Conference Dates | June 16 th -20 th , 2019 |